

AD-A105 386

NAVAL HEALTH RESEARCH CENTER SAN DIEGO CA F/G 6/5  
CORRECTION OF MISINTERPRETED DATA ON THE PSYCHIATRIC STATUS OF --ETC(U)  
MAY 79 L W BAILEY, F A THOMPSON MIPR-7801  
UNCLASSIFIED NAVHLTHRSCHC-79-21 NL

1 of 1  
AVA  
100-598



END  
DATE  
FILMED  
10-81  
DTIC

**LEVEL II**

**2**

AD A105386

**CORRECTION OF MISINTERPRETED DATA ON THE PSYCHIATRIC  
STATUS OF REPATRIATED VIETNAM PRISONERS OF WAR**

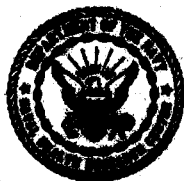
L. W. BAILEY

F. A. THOMPSON

REPORT NO. 79-21 ✓

**DTIC  
ELECTE  
OCT 13 1981**

**S D**  
**D**



**FILE COPY**

**NAVAL HEALTH RESEARCH CENTER**

P. O. BOX 85122  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92138

**NAVAL MEDICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMAND  
BETHESDA, MARYLAND**

**DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A**

Approved for public release;

**81 10 9 103**

Correction of Misinterpreted Data on the Psychiatric Status  
of Repatriated Vietnam Prisoners of War\*

L. W. Bailey and F.A. Thompson

Naval Health Research Center

P.O. Box 85122

San Diego, California 92138

Accession For	
NTIS GRA&I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A	

DTIC  
ELECT  
S 001 1 1981 D

\* Report No. 79-21, This research was supported by the Naval Medical Research and Development Command, Department of the Navy, under research Work Unit MIPR 7801 dtd 1 Oct 78, N0001879WR0007. The views presented in this paper are those of the authors. No endorsement by the Department of the Navy has been given or should be inferred.

Approved for  
Distribution Unlimited

Correction of Misinterpreted Data on the Psychiatric Status  
of Repatriated Vietnam Prisoners of War

Abstract

In a review of literature pertaining to the psychiatric status of Vietnam RPWs during second year follow-up evaluations, it was discovered that some of the data had been poorly formulated and erroneously interpreted in published reports. The purpose of the present paper is to delineate the problem and to derive appropriate interpretations of the material. It is concluded that there was notably less pathology among RPWs during this period than had been implied in previous reports.

## Correction of Misinterpreted Data on the Psychiatric Status of Repatriated Vietnam Prisoners of War

While reviewing literature that pertains to follow-up studies of repatriated prisoners of war (RPWs), some material was found which seems to have resulted in a misinterpretation of the psychiatric status of Vietnam RPWs two years following their return to the United States. In an early report of the follow-up evaluations, O'Connell (1976) presented a table that is difficult to interpret and which conveys an overly negative impression of the psychological condition of the Vietnam RPWs. A portion of the same table, inviting further misinterpretation, recently appeared in a chapter by Hunter (1978) in a book on stress disorders among Vietnam veterans (Figley, 1978). The purpose of this brief report is to delineate the problem and to clarify interpretation of the data.

Information presented at a medical meeting in 1975 concerning POW/MIA matters is displayed in Table 1 (O'Connell, 1976, p. 16). Attention is directed to several apparent interpretations of this table, evident contradictions, sources of misinterpretation, and corrected interpretations.

Table 1  
Navy and Marine Corps Returned Prisoners of War  
Psychiatric Diagnoses - 1975  
Second Year Follow-up  
N=102  
(O'Connell, 1976)

	1974	No. 1975	%	months captive
Marital Maladjustment	(10%)	9	19	68
Obsessive-compulsive Personality	-	8	17	70
Hysterical Personality	-	5	10	61
Depressive Neurosis	(13%)	5	10	72
Anxiety Neurosis	-	4	8	67
Alcoholism	-	4	8	63
Adjustment Reaction	-	4	8	80
Schizoid Personality	-	3	6	62
Schizophrenia	-	1	2	-
Behavior, Symptoms, Subjective Complaints				
Hypomanic Behavior	-	1	2	-
Fatigue	-	1	2	-
Impotence, partial	-	1	2	-
Speech Disturbance	-	1	2	-
Neurological Symptoms	-	1	2	-

#### Apparent Interpretations

1. Figures which appear in the No./1975 column indicate numbers of RPWs (e.g., nine of 102 individuals received a diagnosis of Marital Maladjustment).
2. A summing of the No./1975 column values might lead to the conclusion that 43 of the 102 RPWs received a clinical diagnosis, while five others experienced notable symptoms or complaints. Thus, for 48 RPWs (i.e., 47% of the sample) there was a diagnosis or clinically important symptom.

3. The percentages shown in the third column seem to reflect the relative frequency with which the several diagnoses occurred among the group of 102 (i.e., 17% of the RPWs were diagnosed as having an Obsessive-compulsive Personality).

4. A summing of the percentage column implies that 88% of the RPWs received a clinical diagnosis, and 10% were given a symptom/complaint rating.

#### Evident Contradictions

1. The percentages listed are approximately twice as great as the value derived if the full sample of RPWs is indeed being considered (e.g., for Marital Maladjustment the figure for 9/102 would be 8.8% vice 19%).

2. There is an inconsistency in "apparent interpretations" of the frequency and the percentage data. For example, one way of interpreting the material would indicate that 43 RPWs (42% of 102) received a diagnosis, whereas a review of the percentages suggests that 88% received a clinical diagnosis.

3. Other tables in the O'Connell article indicate that only 29 of the 102 RPWs (i.e., 28%) received a psychiatric diagnosis (O'Connell, 1976, Tables 3-7). Thus, the author subsequently concludes that "most of the RPWs are doing quite well" (p. 21).

#### Sources of Misinterpretation

1. Numbers listed in the No./1975 column actually relate to the number of times the diagnosis was given during the second year follow-up. For example, the diagnosis of Marital Maladjustment occurred nine times. Therefore, the column sum of 48 reflects the total frequency of diagnoses/complaints vice number of RPWs.

2. Some RPWs received more than one diagnosis or symptom rating. Apparently, 29 RPWs received a total of 43 psychiatric diagnoses.

3. The percentage column reflects the frequency of a particular diagnosis/symptom in relation to the total number of diagnoses/symptoms given to the group of RPWs. For example, of the 48 diagnoses/symptoms given, nine (or 19%) were Marital Maladjustment. Thus, the sum of the percentages column would of necessity total to approximately 100%.

#### Corrected Interpretations

1. Twenty-nine of 102 RPWs (28% of the sample) received a clinical diagnosis during second year follow-up evaluations.

2. Some RPWs received more than one diagnosis/symptom.

3. During the course of the examinations, 43 diagnoses and five symptom/complaints were recorded by examining clinicians.

4. Of the 48 diagnoses and symptoms/complaints assessed, 19% were Marital Maladjustment, 17% were Obsessive-compulsive Personality, 10% were Hysterical Personality, etc.

5. It is not possible to determine the number of RPWs that received only one psychiatric diagnosis. For example, one RPW could have been evaluated as having Marital Maladjustment, Fatigue, and Impotence.

The importance of clarifying the interpretation of the O'Connell material is highlighted by the fact that his data have been presented in a misleading form without comment by Hunter (1978, p. 202) in a widely disseminated work regarding Vietnam veterans. As seen in Table 2, only the several diagnostic categories and their respective "percents" were reported. The only possible interpretation of Hunter's table is that 19% of the 102 RPWs were diagnosed as having Marital Maladjustment, 17% were diagnosed as Obsessive-compulsive Personality, and so forth.

Table 2  
Psychiatric Diagnoses for Navy and Marine Corps  
POWs Two Years Post-Return  
(N=102)  
(from Hunter, 1978)

Diagnosis	Percent
Marital Maladjustment	19
Obsessive-compulsive Personality	17
Hysterical Personality	10
Depressive Neurosis	10
Anxiety Neurosis	8
Alcoholism	8
Adjustment Reaction	8
Schizoid Personality	6
Schizophrenia	2



Clearly, there has been a notable and regrettable imprecision in the interpretation of O'Connell's data pertaining to the psychiatric status of Vietnam RPWs at the time of second year follow-up. There actually was much less pathology among these RPWs during this period than was implied in the Hunter article. It is heartening to understand that the rate for Marital Maladjustment was 8.8% rather than 19%, and that the rates for other diagnoses were also comparably lower than those published. Similarly, it is good to know that the over-all rate of psychiatric diagnosis was 28%, i.e., 29 of 102 RPWs receiving diagnoses, rather than 88%.

In the interest of scientific accuracy, it is crucial to acknowledge the cited discrepancies and, insofar as possible, to disseminate the correct interpretations. The most up-to-date information regarding patterns of psychiatric findings among Vietnam RPWs (from repatriation through 1975) has been reported by Spaulding, Richlin, O'Connell, and Holtzman (1978).

## References

- Figley, C.R. (Ed.) Stress disorders among Vietnam veterans: Theory, research and treatment. N.Y.: Brunner/Mazel, 1978.
- Hunter, E.J. The Vietnam POW veteran: Immediate and long-term effects of captivity. In C.R. Figley (Ed.), Stress disorders among Vietnam veterans: Theory, research and treatment. N.Y.: Brunner/Mazel, 1978.
- O'Connell, P.F. Trends in psychological adjustment: Observations made during successive psychiatric follow-up interviews of returned Navy-Marine Corps POWs. In R.C. Spaulding (Ed.), Proceedings of the Third Annual Joint Medical Meeting Concerning POW/MIA Matters. San Diego: Naval Health Research Center, 1976.
- Spaulding, R.C., Richlin, M., O'Connell, P.F., & Holtzman, G.L. Navy repatriated prisoners of war: Psychiatric findings and adjustment. San Diego: Naval Health Research Center, Technical Report 78-51, 1978.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER 79-21	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO. AD A105386	3. REPORT'S CATALOG NUMBER (9)
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) (6) <del>Correction of</del> Misinterpreted Data from the Psychiatric Examinations of Repatriated Vietnam Prisoners of War.	5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Final rpt 2	
7. AUTHOR(s) (10) Larry W. Bailey & Frank A. Thompson	8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s) MIPR-7801 dtd 1 Oct 78 N0001879WR0007	
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Naval Health Research Center P.O. Box 85122 San Diego, CA 92138	10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS (11)	
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS Naval Medical Research & Development Command National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, MD 20014	12. REPORT DATE 17 May 79	
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office) Bureau of Medicine & Surgery Department of the Navy Washington, DC 20372 (12) 14	13. NUMBER OF PAGES 8	
15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) Unclassified		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited. (14) NAVHLTHRSCHC-79-21		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (for the abstract entered in Block 20; if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Repatriated prisoners of war Follow-up studies Psychiatric Diagnosis		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) In a review of literature pertaining to the psychiatric status of Vietnam RPWs during second year follow-up, it was discovered that some of the data had been poorly formulated and erroneously interpreted in published reports. The purpose of the present paper is to delineate the problem and to derive appropriate interpretations of the material. It is concluded that there was notably less pathology among RPWs during this period than had been thought.		

DD FORM 1473 1 JAN 73

EDITION OF 1 NOV 68 IS OBSOLETE  
S/N 0102-LF-014-6601

Unclassified

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

391642

ATE  
LMED  
-8